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ABSTRACT

"Vocational Education in Texas High Schools: An Ethnic Comparison", was initiated in March 1973 and continued through the summer of 1974 when all project reports were completed; this is a summary and conclusion of the entire study. Among the major goals were to: document and describe the experiences and aspirations of a large sample of black high school youth and assess their attitudes toward school, work, vocational education, and other factors; profile a selected sample of Anglo and Mexican American students in order to compare all three groups in an urban setting; compare vocational education enrollment patterns with manpower needs in State and local areas; and provide State and local educators with project findings through on-site inservice training workshops and other dissemination procedures. The total thrust of the study was to improve occupational training opportunities and career development of all high school students in the State of Texas. One important aspect was to make recommendations to the funding agency and selected school districts concerning program development. Other recommendations, based on the needs expressed by the respondents (mostly low income) to the eight questionnaires and interviews included: better coordination between vocational education programs and labor market demands, improved guidance programs, and utilization and implementation of major recommendations made as a result of these findings. (AH)

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OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION IN TEXAS: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

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PREFACE

Occupational Education in Texas: Summary and Conclusions culminates three years of research (1971-1974) into secondary vocational education programs in the State of Texas. The first year and a half focused on the problems confronting the Mexican American student. The findings of this study were reported in an earlier publication submitted to the Texas Education Agency, Division of Research and Development.* The results of that study revealed that Mexican American high school students were not only overrepresented in vocational programs, but the programs in which they were enrolled did not lead to jobs which would be available in the labor market. Further, the majority of the students, most of whom were from low socioeconomic backgrounds, indicated that their first post-high school preference was to obtain employment. Thus, questions were raised about the adequacy of the high school curricula, including vocational education programs. Were they adequately geared to serve the needs of all students? Or were certain groups of students being programmed into courses which were seen as "second rate programs" by much of the public? The introduction of career education in Texas forced educators and the public alike to re-examine their views toward the working world and the "everyone must go to college syndrome." The implications of career education also made vocational educators re-evaluate their positions as career education not only elevated the status of their programs, but made them more accountable. The issues and questions raised by the initial inquiry into vocational education programs in Texas

*Mexican American Youth and Vocational Education in Texas, University of Houston, Center for Human Resources, 1973. (ED 075117)

prompted the Texas Education Agency to continue its research into the role and adequacy of such programs. Special emphasis was placed on the relationship between occupational training programs and minority groups in Texas.

The research conducted during the 1973-1974 school year by the Center for Human Resources resulted in four special reports all published during the summer of 1974. The first report, Black Youth and Occupational Education in Texas, described the responses given by 1,531 Black high school students in 11 school districts. The second report, Occupational Education in Texas: An Ethnic Comparison, documented the differences and similarities found among a sample of Black, Mexican American, and Anglo students in six major urban areas representing 15 high schools in Texas. Manpower and Vocational Education in Texas examined occupational program enrollment patterns and compared them to the present and developing trends in the labor market. Another report, A Demographic Profile of Texas and Selected Cities: Some Recent Trends, 1950-1970, analyzed present and past population patterns, growth, and concentration in the State.

This report attempts to summarize the results of the entire study and place in perspective the implications of such findings for all persons concerned with the education and training of young people. Any recommendations made here are based on the needs expressed by students, educators, the community at large, and other manpower organizations especially concerned with occupational training programs. The purpose of these recommendations is to assist educational policy makers in making better informed decisions concerning program and curriculum development which will enhance the career potential of all students in the State of Texas.

PART ONE

OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION IN TEXAS

I. Introduction

The project entitled "Vocational Education in Texas High Schools: An Ethnic Comparison" was funded by the Division of Occupational Research and Development of the Texas Education Agency. All fieldwork and reporting was conducted by the University of Houston's Center for Human Resources. This project was initiated in March, 1973, and continued through the summer of 1974 when all project reports were completed, submitted to the funding agency and disseminated to educators and other persons concerned with the education and training of young people in Texas.

There were a number of goals and objectives associated with this research effort. One of the major goals was to document and describe the experiences and aspirations of a large sample of Black high school youth and assess their attitudes toward school, work, vocational education, and other factors. Other major project objectives included: profiling a selected sample of Anglo and Mexican American students in order to compare all three groups in an urban setting; comparing vocational education enrollment patterns with manpower needs in state and local areas, and providing state and local educators with project findings through on-site in-service training workshops and other dissemination procedures. Although there were several other objectives, priority was placed on those discussed above. One important aspect of this study was to make recommendations to the funding agency and selected school districts concerning program development and continuation based upon program relatedness and efficiency. The total thrust of the study was to improve

occupational training opportunities and career development of all high school students in the State of Texas.

Data were gathered through the use of eight questionnaires, most of which were highly structured in order to facilitate interviewing, coding, and analysis.* Group interviewing techniques were utilized with the students. Graduates, dropouts, employers, and parents were interviewed on a personal basis by specially selected personnel from the target areas. School and community representatives were interviewed by project staff. Manpower and demographic information was gathered from such sources as the 1970 census count, data provided by the Texas Employment Commission, and, for vocational enrollment figures, data made available through the Texas Education Agency, Office of Occupational Administrative Services.

Eleven cities in Texas were selected as target areas. These included several smaller East Texas cities with large Black populations--Marshall, Tyler, Beaumont, and Port Arthur--and seven other cities characterized by varying tri-ethnic population sizes--Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, Waco, Austin, Galveston, and San Antonio.** The Black analysis covered all 11 cities and included 1,531 Black high school students. The ethnic comparison covered the six major urban areas and 1,605 high school students--470 Anglos, 490 Mexican Americans, and 645 Blacks. Both vocational (VE) and non-vocational (Non-VE) students were interviewed, and in each instance twice as many VE students were represented in each sample (by design). In all, over 3,000 persons were involved in this study. All coding and analysis of data took place at the Center for Human Resources utilizing computer facilities at the University of Houston and Rice University.

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*See Appendix A for description of methodology and instruments employed in the study.

**See Appendix B for names of school districts and high schools surveyed in each city.

II. Population and Economic Characteristics in Texas

In 1970 there were 11 million persons in Texas, making it the fourth largest state in the nation. Nearly one-third of its population was of minority origin--18 percent Mexican American and about 12 percent Black. Their geographical locations are somewhat distinct. Mexican Americans reside mostly in the southern and western part of the State along the Mexican border. However, cities such as Houston, Dallas, and Fort Worth contain a large number of Mexican Americans. Blacks are primarily concentrated in the eastern part of the State. The Houston, Dallas, and Fort Worth SMSAs account for two-thirds of the Black population in Texas. Like the Mexican American population, three-fourths of all Blacks reside in metropolitan areas with 85 percent of these living in the inner cities. Thus, minority groups in Texas will continue to be urban populations. Assuming that present growth rates remain the same, 48 percent of the population in Houston and 62 percent of the population in Dallas will be of minority origin by 1990.

Compared to the Anglo population, Mexican Americans and Blacks have lower educational, income, and occupational levels, higher unemployment rates, and are more often underemployed. Nearly four out of ten Mexican Americans and Blacks fall in the poverty category.* Occupational patterns in Texas reveal that Blacks and Mexican Americans hold only a small proportion of the professional, technical, and other white-collar occupations while being grossly overrepresented in the blue-collar jobs. Blacks especially are underrepresented in the managerial, clerical, and sales categories. Mexican Americans fare only slightly better in these categories, but the bulk of them are still entrenched in the unskilled, semiskilled, and farm laborer

*Poverty in Texas 1973. Report by the Office of Economic Opportunity, Texas Department of Community Affairs, Austin, Texas, May, 1974.

occupations. It is significant to note that although Blacks had much higher educational levels than Mexican Americans, Mexican Americans seemed to hold better jobs and have higher incomes than Blacks. Generally, however, both groups in Texas are characterized by low socioeconomic conditions. This raises serious questions about the quality of education and training offered to minority groups in Texas and the employment opportunities made available to them, particularly Blacks.

III. Overview of Vocational Education in Texas

Vocational education programs are collapsed into eight major categories set up by the U. S. Office of Education. These include agriculture, distributive education, health education, home economics, office occupations, technical education (mostly at the post-secondary level), trades and industrial occupations, and a category which includes programs not elsewhere classified. These programs constitute what is known as the vocational education curriculum in a secondary school setting. These programs are available to varying degrees within many high schools; in some instances, area schools or technical centers are set up where the whole range of vocational programs are available.

In the fall of 1973, there were 312,261 students in grades 9-12 enrolled in vocational programs in Texas. That means that more than four out of ten high school students were enrolled in occupational training programs in the State. In 1965, fewer than one out of three high school students were enrolled in vocational programs. Thus, it appears that VE programs have gained in popularity over the last ten years due to increased interest, emphasis, and funding of vocational programs in Texas.

See ERRATA on inside of back cover.

Of those students enrolled in vocational programs in the State, 38 percent are Anglo, 39 percent are Mexican American, and 47 percent are Black. School districts surveyed in this study generally followed similar patterns. That is, Blacks appeared to be more overrepresented in VE programs than Mexican Americans and Mexican Americans more than Anglos. This was especially true in urban areas having a tri-ethnic student enrollment.

The school districts surveyed in this study had lower VE participation rates than the statewide average. A smaller percentage of their students were enrolled in VE programs than other school districts in Texas. Most of these 11 school districts were large metropolitan areas accounting for about one-fourth of all students enrolled in grades 9-12 in Texas. This indicates that the smaller rural and small town school districts have higher VE participation rates than the large urban school districts.

In terms of the types of vocational education programs made available to or experienced by the high school students, two programs account for nearly 70 percent of the total VE enrollment--home economics (50.5 percent) and agriculture (17.3 percent). The trades and industries program accounts for 17.7 percent, distributive education for 7.3 percent, office occupations for 5.8 percent, and health occupations for 1.3 percent. Other programs, such as technical education, account for less than one percent of the total VE enrollment. Agricultural programs are found mostly in the small, rural school districts while home economics programs are more prevalent in the larger school districts.

Females comprise slightly more than half of the total VE enrollment (56 percent). Homemaking accounts for three-fourths of the VE female enrollment, while less than ten percent are in office occupations. Nearly 70 percent of the VE male enrollment is in trades and industries (35 percent) and agriculture (35 percent).

State VE enrollment figures by ethnic group reveal some interesting observations. Six out of ten Blacks are enrolled in home economics programs whereas nearly one out of two Anglo and Mexican American are in this program. More Anglos than minority students are enrolled in agriculture programs. Black (4.5 percent) and Mexican American (6.3 percent) students are less likely than Anglos (8.3 percent) to be enrolled in distributive education programs. Mexican Americans continue to be overrepresented in the trades and industry category--almost three out of ten Mexican American students are in such programs compared to about 16 percent of the Anglo and Black students. Mexican American students (8 percent) are also much more likely than either Black (4.7 percent) or Anglo students (5.3 percent) to be enrolled in office occupation courses. There are, of course, some variations in local patterns.

As in the previous study conducted by the Center, vocational education offerings do not seem to reflect present and future manpower demands in Texas. There is still an overabundance of home economics and agriculture units. There are not enough offerings in those training programs which are presently in demand--health occupations, the technical fields, sales and clerical, etc. It is apparent that, in general, statewide VE program offerings in secondary schools are not matching the increasing varied and technical demands of the labor market. This, coupled with the fact that many students are not getting any training at all and many college bound students will not finish college even if they do enroll,indicates that many high schools in Texas are not adequately gearing their efforts to meet the new challenges thrust upon them by career education and societal change.

It is not entirely accurate, however, to say that vocational education is not performing adequately in all areas of the State. Recent improvements, changes, and additions have resulted in excellent occupational programs and

schools in several areas of the State. Dallas has Skyline High School, a school with one of the best plant facilities in the State, if not the nation. Their course offerings are varied and provide students with an array of alternatives. Technical centers and area schools, such as the one in Houston (Houston Technical Institute) have several well developed programs. The initiation of "alternative" schools has been an encouraging development. Many other school districts have one or more outstanding programs which serve the needs of their students. More schools are initiating new programs and expanding existing ones to better meet the needs of their students. However, there are still many unmet needs, and there is definitely more room for improvement in vocational education programs throughout the State.

The Advisory Council for Technical-Vocational Education in Texas has been involved in promoting the development of occupational training in Texas since its inception in 1969. Its many activities include submitting annual reports to the Governor and holding periodic conferences in cities throughout Texas.* The Council is continually updating information and in its annual reports submits recommendations to the State Board for Vocational Education. Some of its recommendations have been taken into consideration by the Texas Education Agency and the State Board of Education. As a result of its efforts, vocational education in Texas is acquiring an improved image and many people are becoming better informed about vocational education and its related activities. In addition, The Advisory Council has been and continues to be a strong proponent of career education.

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*For a complete listing of the activities of the Advisory Council for Vocational Education in Texas see Appendix C of this report. The Advisory Council's headquarters are located in Austin, Texas.

IV. Attitudes Toward Vocational Education

Although the status of vocational education has improved in recent years, it is still characterized by several problems. The negative attitudes of the past still linger in the public eye. Vocational education programs still evoke a "second rate" image in some areas, and oftentimes even school personnel regard VE programs as a "dumping ground" for slow students, troublemakers, and others in the school setting who are not college bound. Because there are few follow-up studies to document the experiences of VE graduates, the question of whether VE graduates receive adequate training is continually raised.

There is still an inordinate amount of "lip service" paid to vocational education. Many people, including educators, view VE positively but are reluctant to support it actively within the school setting. Many parents, although not seeing VE disparagingly, still think it is for someone else's child, and encourage their children to attend college. Curriculum development is still heavily influenced by college and university entrance requirements. Vocational education seems to be gaining momentum in the larger school districts, but the problems encountered there seem more severe. Program composition does not adequately reflect the job market, and many high demand occupations are simply not being offered in secondary school programs. Although some schools are beginning to diversify their vocational education offerings, there is still much room for improvement. Minority students in the larger urban areas appear to be overrepresented in vocational education programs, and this brings critical replies from the minority communities in those areas. They question the screening procedures used in recruiting Black and Mexican American students. Do counselors and others tend to subconsciously place minority students in VE programs because of their ethnicity? Although students

do not indicate this, the feeling persists in the minority communities, whether real or perceived, that some schools attempt to fill up their VE rosters with such students. This study revealed that many VE programs are composed mostly of students coming from economically disadvantaged homes, and in Texas, Blacks and Mexican Americans comprise a large proportion of that population.

The last five years have seen an upswing in vocational education activities. Increased funding, changes in the labor market which indicate a need for more occupational training, and career education have served to generate more interest in vocational education. Citizen and business groups, along with state and federal agencies, have shown more involvement in this area. More students than ever before are enrolled in vocational programs, and interest is growing. Vocational education is slowly becoming a strong, viable and competitive curriculum within the school setting in many school districts. Those persons interviewed in this study revealed that, as a concept, vocational education was widely accepted. However, they felt that VE programs were not totally or adequately meeting the needs of their communities. The need for program diversification and expansion (in appropriate areas), the need to upgrade facilities and instructional staff, and the need to keep "selling" and improving the image of vocational education were listed as major priorities by school, community, and employer informants.

Some community and school informants felt that VE had certain disadvantages for Black and other minority high school students. Many of them indicated that VE participation in high school would tend to lead minority students away from the academic curriculum required for college work, thus preventing minority students from pursuing this alternative. Inadequate training,

facilities and instructional staff were seen as major drawbacks for VE students. They also expressed the opinion that many of these students, even if they receive adequate training in high school, still found themselves in low-paying, unskilled jobs after graduation. Mexican American respondents in an earlier study voiced similar complaints against Mexican American student participation in VE programs. Despite these feelings, however, community and school informants felt that participation in vocational programs offered minority students some advantages such as the opportunity to learn a skill, obtain a better-paying job, derive greater job satisfaction, and generally improve their socioeconomic status. But the fact remains that vocational education is far from being fully accepted by the minority communities in Texas. The implications for expanded and continued contact between school VE programs and the minority communities are obvious.

Strong support for career education was voiced by school, community, and employer informants. Most school personnel interviewed appeared knowledgeable about its objectives and indicated a need for an expansion of career education activities in the schools. However, there remained many school personnel who did not know much about career education or had misconceptions about it. Particularly distressing was the fact that the relationship between career and vocational education did not seem to be fully understood by some educators. Much of the public is still in the dark about career education. Vocational educators, more so than others in the school environment, seemed more receptive to and knowledgeable about career education. Community informants and employers, on the other hand, appeared to have a nebulous conception of career education. More efforts on the part of state and local educational agencies need to be made in promoting and effectively implementing career education throughout the State of Texas.

V. Summary: Occupational Education in Texas: An Ethnic Comparison

The tri-ethnic analysis covered 15 Texas high schools in six major urban school districts. A total of 1,605 students were interviewed and the data were compared in three different ways: among ethnic groups regardless of the program; within ethnic groups by VE or Non-VE program; and by ethnic group and program. The major findings of the tri-ethnic analysis are summarized below:

A. *Background of the Students*

The socioeconomic status (SES) of students in different school programs and ethnic groups was not the same, although as a whole their SES characteristics were low. Using a two-factor index of social position (education and occupation), it was found that Non-VE students tended to have higher SES levels than VE students; minority students had lower SES characteristics than Anglo students; Mexican American VE students had the lowest SES indicators and Anglo Non-VE students the highest. The educational profiles of the Mexican American families were extremely low. Black families had higher educational attainments but lower occupational characteristics. It is important to keep in mind that many of the results of this study may be influenced more by the student's socioeconomic status than by his ethnicity.

B. *Post-High School Plans*

One of the most important objectives of this study was to determine the students' post-high school plans. What did they want to do immediately after graduation from high school? Students were asked two questions in this regard.

First, they were asked to indicate their degrees of preference to a series of alternatives, and secondly, they were asked to give their one most preferred post-high school option. These alternatives given the students ranged from obtaining a steady job to joining the military.

Recognizing that high school students often are considering more than one single alternative or are not sure about their plans, they were given a chance to rate several post-high school alternatives as follows: "I want to do this," "I am not sure," and "I don't want to do this." Given this broader choice, students of all ethnic groups indicated their strongest preference was for a steady job, with a college education and advanced vocational technical education as the second and third preferences of most students. About three-fourths of all VE students and about two-thirds of all Non-VE students indicated that they wanted a steady job after graduation.

When limiting their choices to one most preferred post-high school activity, there were more pronounced differences between VE and Non-VE students and among ethnic groups. VE students consistently listed getting a steady job as their first preference. Attending a four year college was their second most preferred choice, and enrollment in advanced technical vocational programs was their third alternative. Non-VE students said that attending college was their first preference, obtaining a steady job was their second choice, and advanced vocational training in a post-secondary institution ranked as their third preference. It should be noted that more than one-third of all students chose a steady job as their first post-high school preference.

There were some ethnic variations. When combining the VE and Non-VE responses for each ethnic group, Anglos and Mexican Americans opted for a

steady job; for Blacks, getting a job followed close behind attending a university. For Anglos and Mexican Americans, attending a university was the second choice (although it was more popular among Anglos than Mexican Americans).

Overall, student responses revealed that more students are opting for a steady job immediately after graduation from high school. Many still plan to attend four year colleges, especially Non-VE students. Fewer students are interested in post-secondary programs, although many indicated that they are considering such programs. Other post-high school activities such as apprenticeship training, joining the military, and self-employment were not frequently mentioned by the students.

C. Type of Job, Education, and Training Desired

Regardless of their post-high school plans, students responded to a number of "if" questions concerning jobs, college, and post-high school training activities. Again, some differences were noted between VE and Non-VE students and among ethnic groups.

The majority of the students saw themselves fitting into either lower blue-collar or white-collar jobs, most of which are entry level jobs. As expected, VE students identified jobs in the blue-collar sector and Non-VE students in the white-collar area. Although realistic about their expected jobs, they tended to overestimate their earning capacity--VE more than Non-VE and minority groups more than Anglos. Perhaps the feeling that he had a skill to offer the employer made the VE student more confident of a higher entry level wage than the Non-VE student. Most students--about eight out of ten--indicated that they expected their first job to be in their home city.

Concerning college or university work, the three most favored alternatives were the professions, business administration and the technical fields, although a fifth of the sample selected a field of study other than the ones given to them (the most popular field of study in this category was health occupations and it was most frequently mentioned by females). There were several differences by ethnic group and program; for example, more Non-VE than VE Black students preferred the professions; more VE than Non-VE Anglo students chose technical fields as their area of specialization; and more VE Mexican American students opted for engineering and technical fields, with Non-VE Mexican Americans selecting education and the professions.

Most students planned on attending either a large state university or a local community or junior college to acquire their education. More VE students than Non-VE students indicated an interest in the two year institutions. Very few students indicated that they would attend smaller public or private universities.

For post-secondary vocational-technical education, more than seven out of ten students said they would attend public institutions such as a technical institute or a community college. The three programs most frequently favored by students were health care, business, and data processing. Most students expected to obtain this training either in their local area or in a city in Texas close to home. Mexican American VE students appeared to be the most home city bound, and Blacks (both VE and Non-VE) were the ones who most preferred to leave the state for educational purposes.

Marriage as a career alternative was expressed by only two out of ten students, mostly by female students. Mexican American students were more inclined toward marriage after graduation than were Anglo or Black students.

Nearly four out of ten students indicated that once married, a young woman should work part-time and do her best to take care of the home. More Mexican American students believed that the woman should stay at home and care for the family (about one-third), while fewer Blacks shared this view.

D. Ideal and Expected Jobs

More than four out of ten students listed their ideal job as falling in the professional or highly skilled area, with craftsmen, skilled jobs and those in the sales and clerical field appearing as second and third choices. The major reason for wanting these ideal jobs centered on "it pays good money." The two other most frequently mentioned reasons were "it is exciting work" and "I can help other people." When asked about what kind of job they <u>really</u> expect to have most of their lives, students tend to become less idealistic in making their selection. Fewer students indicate the professional and technical fields as their ideal job, and more students selected the non-manual sales and clerical work and the crafts and skilled categories. Even so, the students' job expectations remain high, but it seems unlikely that many will eventually reach their ideal or even their expected job (especially those who opted for the professional jobs). Many indicated a desire to obtain a job immediately after graduation from high school, and most of the professional and technical jobs require that the student acquire additional education and/or training.

E. Future Preferences and Educational Aspirations

The desire for obtaining as much education as possible was the first priority of minority students when responding to an item inquiring into future preferences. Anglo students indicated that their first preference was

to get the job they most wanted; minority students selected it as their second most preferred future alternative. All three groups cited earning capacity as their third choice for the future. Blacks and Mexican Americans stressed education, preferred job, and income more than Anglos.

In a separate question limiting itself to educational aspirations, all students rejected the idea of not going to school again, and one out of three indicated that he/she wanted to graduate from a four-year college or university. One out of five showed a preference toward completing a post-secondary vocational-technical program. Blacks--both VE and Non-VE--were more inclined toward college work, including graduate studies. Non-VE Anglo and Mexican American students showed college graduation as their first preference but Mexican American students were less inclined toward graduate studies. Although all three groups stress the importance of educational achievement, the educational aspirations of Blacks appear to be the highest, Mexican Americans the lowest.

F. *Parents and Students*

The involvement of parents in their sons' or daughters' school activities and their attitudes toward school were ascertained through a series of items to which the students responded and through limited personal interviews conducted with parents. Most students indicated that their parents encouraged them to remain in school. However, Non-VE parents were more active in school affairs than VE parents. Black parents and Non-VE Anglo parents seemed more supportive of a college bound curriculum for their children, with Mexican American parents less so. In fact, Mexican American parents participated less in school activities, knew less about school, and helped their children least with their school work. In separate interviews with Black and Mexican

American parents, it was found that although they express much interest in their children's work, this interest is frequently a passive one.

G. Job Problems

Students indicated that lack of work experience and job skills were the two most troublesome problems encountered in seeking employment. Overall, it appears that Anglo students have more confidence in their job seeking skills, Mexican Americans are somewhat apprehensive about their ability to understand and communicate effectively, and Blacks see various factors related to the interview situation as somewhat threatening. Assistance in job hunting skills was not forthcoming from many school related persons. Vocational teachers, however, were consistently more helpful to VE students than Non-VE students, and parents appeared to be the most helpful out-of-school source, even more than any of the in-school persons. As in previous studies, students indicated that job related topics should be discussed in high school, and many stated their intention to participate in such a course if it were offered. Black and Mexican American students were more emphatic in this regard.

H. Migration and Perception of Employment Possibilities

Migration possibilities among the students were explored, and two-thirds of the students indicated that they were not planning to move from their home city. Regarding possible future migration, students said they would move if there were a lack of economic and employment opportunities. The factors which might prompt migration were more crucial for Mexican Americans and Blacks. They more frequently mentioned that jobs did not pay well and that there was no real future for a high school graduate in their home community. Generally,

most students were reluctant to migrate, but if conditions were unsatisfactory some of them would not hesitate to move. It seems, however, that urban youth will stay in their home cities while those living in non-metropolitan areas will continue to migrate into the larger cities.

Although all students felt that there were limited job openings in the higher employment categories, Anglo students perceived more employment opportunities in their home cities than minority students. That is, Anglos felt that there were more job openings at the professional, technical, skilled and clerical levels for them. At the unskilled level, Blacks saw more openings than did Anglos or Mexican Americans. When asked directly "who do you think will get these jobs" (in terms of ethnicity), the modal response for all students was that anyone could get them. However, the intensity of response varied among the ethnic groups. Minority students saw Anglos as getting the better jobs more so than Anglos themselves, who felt that anyone could get whatever job he wanted. Anglos appeared to be more optimistic when projecting their own employment situation than did Mexican American or Black students, who tended to perceive some discrimination in the labor market.

I. Extracurricular and Other School Activities

Non-VE students, more than VE students, participated in extracurricular activities, with Anglos and Blacks having the highest rates of participation, Mexican Americans the lowest. VE students, however, held more out of school jobs than Non-VE students, and most of the VE students had received school assistance in finding these jobs. This is probably a function of their participation in a VE course where oftentimes a job is a required condition.

Nearly a third of all students indicated that there were some programs in the schools about which they would like more information. Minority VE

students most frequently mentioned this desire. Non-VE students expressed more of an interest in programs not available in their home school, mostly in the area of health occupations. As evidenced by this response, there appearsto be more potential VE enrollees in the schools than presently indicated.

In portraying the best kind of student suited for VE programs, all students felt that the best prospect is one who has to make a living after he graduates from high school. The bright student was mentioned less frequently, but VE students were less prone than Non-VE students to dismiss him as a potential VE student. Both Black and Mexican American students, more so than Anglos, believed that the VE student would be from a minority group.

J. A Note on VE Students

Vocational education students responded to several questions concerning their program in school. The VE sample showed that while Black and Anglo students were evenly distributed throughout the major VE programs, Mexican Americans were overrepresented in the trades and industrial programs and less represented in the other categories. Most VE students were in their first year of vocational training and felt that the training they were now receiving would be related to their future jobs. Nine out of ten students said that they liked the VE program in which they were now enrolled. When asked why they enrolled in VE programs, the two major reasons given by all students were (1) that the program might be helpful to them, and (2) that they liked the program. Despite the students' responses, some community and school respondents continue to question the selection procedures for placing students in VE programs. Blacks and Mexican Americans appear to be more concerned with this issue, as the overrepresentation of minority students in VE programs is rather pronounced, especially in the larger urban areas surveyed.

VI. Summary: Black Youth and Occupational Education in Texas

A total of 1,531 Black high School students were interviewed in 23 high schools covering 11 Texas school districts. This analysis focuses on the comparisons between Black VE and Non-VE students and on male/female distinctions. Also included in this section is a summary of the responses given by a limited sample of Black graduates, Black dropouts, and Black parents.

A. *Student Profile*

As in the tri-ethnic sample, three-fourths of the Black students came from low income working class homes. In the previous Mexican American survey, a similar number of students came from low income families with relatively little difference between VE and Non-VE students. Although sampling bias may be partially responsible for this; i.e., many schools surveyed were inner city schools, it appears that most VE students come from such backgrounds and not from middle or upper income families. Almost eight out of ten Black VE students in this sample were characterized by low social status. In addition, about one-third of the principal wage earners in the Black sample were mothers.

Although low income status does not necessarily imply that the principal wage earners lack formal education (as in the case of some Blacks), it does imply that Black wage earners were employed at jobs that did not maximize their educational potentials. This might reflect on the inadequacies of their formal education and it might also indicate that Blacks have been shunted into low status jobs in those parts of Texas where this survey was conducted. It also reflects the high percentage of Black women who are principal wage earners and who more than likely hold low paying jobs.

B. Post-High School Plans and Future Preferences

When asked about their most preferred post-high school alternative, four out of ten Black VE students listed a steady job, while one in three selected a four-year college. For Non-VE students the choices were reversed--four out of ten chose college attendance and three out of ten indicated they wanted to work. However, when given a broader choice of options, that is, they could check more than one, more than seven out of ten students said they definitely wanted a steady job. Less than half said they definitely wanted to attend college and many were not sure about advanced technical-vocational education after graduation from high school.

In general, "ideal" vocations for all students would be in the professions or in highly skilled technical jobs, jobs that pay well and that allow them to be helpful to other people. When comparing ideal jobs to "expected" jobs, sights are somewhat lowered but still tend to favor, especially for Non-VE students, higher status jobs. Of interest to note is that many Black females showed a decided interest in health service careers but were somewhat nebulous as to how they could enter such careers or how they could prepare for them.

In ranking future life preferences, Black students ranked "getting all the education I can" as the thing they looked forward to the most. Obtaining the job they wanted was their second choice and least valued were getting married and having lots of free time. In addition, when presented with a number of hypothetical future life alternatives, Black students consistently stressed "getting all the education I can" as their first priority. Thus, the idea that Black students are apathetic about their futures must be re-examined--students in this sample were definitely not apathetic. They

indicated a marked desire for success through the educational process, currently in high school, and subsequently in university work or other training or education. Their academic preparation may be lacking in many regards--less than adequate instruction, counseling, school facilities, facilities for study at home--but their ambitions are high. Indeed, it might be said that their ambitions are unrealistically high, not because they are Black, but because the occupational structure that must absorb them is limited in its present capacity to find places for as many who might opt for professional and advanced technical careers. A key question which must be faced focuses upon keeping alive and dynamic the clearly evident ambitions of these high school youth, but gearing them into meaningful productive channels. As with other youth, the inability to reach their career expectations regardless of the reasons, will breed frustration and despair.

About half of all students would leave their home cities to find a job, citing economic factors as the prime reasons they would do so. This is much more a function of the availability of jobs in large cities and the non-availability of jobs in smaller cities than of any other factor. Students generally see no ethnic bias in obtaining jobs although there is a tendency to view Anglos as having an edge over minority people in getting the better jobs.

C. Job Problems and Attitudes Toward School

As with all youth, the primary job related problems of young Blacks centered around lack of training and experience. But Blacks seemed more susceptible to discriminatory practices when seeking employment. Although they seem to feel that their job hunting problems will be minimal, they overwhelmingly support the idea of a job problems course in high school, a

course that they would want to take, if offered. However, there seems to be a marked discrepancy between what these young people see as problems in finding a job and what employers see as problems for them in finding a job. As an example, Black students rated all problem areas in job seeking as giving them little or no difficulty. That which concerned them least was "knowing how to dress." Employers, on the other hand, saw such problems as giving Black students difficulty, especially in grooming and dress. However, students more so than employers, perceived discrimination in employment practices to be more of a problem.

Using both in-school and community resources, a job orientation course could be relatively easily organized. For the information--and for the ultimate protection--of students, it would seem that this should be of very high priority in all school systems serving minority students. Females especially, who indicate a reluctance to support the traditional wife/mother role, should be given the opportunity to better prepare themselves for the world of work through such a course and through prompting, counseling, and educating in all areas of possible employment (including those that have been almost exclusively male sanctuaries).

Students generally indicated positive feelings toward their school and their educational programs and said they intended to graduate. Both VE and Non-VE students were particularly supportive of vocational education in the high schools and felt that most students should have some vocational preparation. All students dismissed traditional ideas about the role of women and saw females as a constant element in the present and future labor force. Students saw their parents as very supportive of their educational endeavors although parents were not often involved in school activities.

Within the VE student subsample, all major program areas are represented. Most VE students who held out-of-school jobs indicated that they were related to their vocational programs. Most VE students also felt that their first job after graduation and the jobs they would hold in the future would definitely or possibly be related to their training in high school.

Parents appear to be the individuals who were most helpful in assisting VE students in selecting their programs but students very strongly indicated that they selected a vocational training program basically because they liked it and thought it would be helpful to them in the future. They tended to learn about vocational programs from their peer group in school. VE students generally expressed very positive attitudes for their programs in school.

D. Black Graduates and Dropouts

A limited number of Black high school graduates (145) and Black school dropouts (136) were interviewed by project staff. Most of the sample came from the larger urban areas surveyed--Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, and Fort Worth. Their responses are summarized below.

In comparing the Black graduates and the dropouts, there appeared to be significant differences between the two groups. More graduates than dropouts had worked since leaving school. Graduates had better skills, better jobs, and more post-high school training experiences; had made slightly more money; and had less intense job related problems. Graduates appeared to be more mobile than dropouts, but both groups indicated a desire to relocate to the larger urban areas in Texas--mainly Houston, Dallas and Fort Worth.

Both graduates and dropouts still had relatively high career goals and expressed positive feelings toward further education. They were primarily interested in getting the job they desired, obtaining all the education they

could, and in earning as much money as they could. Graduates and dropouts were interested in additional training and education. Graduates were more oriented toward a college education, and dropouts more toward VE training.

Those respondents who took VE in high school were generally favorable towards the program; however, more graduates than dropouts felt that VE was related to their first job. Graduates were more active in school activities and had fewer job related problems. Although both groups reported that lack of work experience was a major problem in getting a job, dropouts encountered more difficulty in "expressing themselves well" and in "selling themselves to employers." Both groups felt that there was a need for a job orientation course at the high school level and indicated they would have participated in one if it had been available. Although the parents of both groups encouraged their children to stay in school, graduates appeared to have received more parental support and their parents were more active in school activities. Dropouts indicated that they left school because (1) they had to work, and (2) they disliked school.

Black graduates and dropouts, much like the Black in-school student, reported a strong interest in obtaining more education and training. Dropouts particularly sensed their inadequate educational and skills preparation and said that, if the schools have something to offer them, such as a VE course in which they might be interested, they would consider returning to school. This presents adult education programs and community colleges with a special challenge--that of motivating young Blacks to return to school by providing them with relevant and adequate programs. Schools must make more of an effort to retain students in school and avoid the "push out" syndrome. Potential dropouts must be identified and provided with additional assistance.

The respondents themselves--graduates and dropouts--indicated that intensive occupational and career guidance activities in the junior and senior high schools would have been extremely helpful to them. More emphasis on career information, self-awareness activities, and job orientation would seem to be welcomed by such students while they are still in school. This sentiment was echoed by school personnel, employers, and other community informants.

E. Black Parents and School Activities

A small sample of Black parents (82) whose children were in secondary vocational education programs was interviewed by project staff. As with Mexican American parents studied earlier, Black parents expressed a high degree of interest in their children's school activities but their active participation in them was rather low. Generally, parents were very supportive of the total school experience, including vocational education programs. They wanted their children to either get a job or go to college after graduation from school. Black parents did not seem to know much about post-high school training opportunities despite the availability of such training. Community colleges and other post-secondary training entities must make more of an effort to inform parents of their training programs.

Black parents, as did Mexican American parents, seemed receptive to any school initiated move to bring them closer to the schools. Although hindered by economic and time constraints, Black parents voiced a strong desire to be more active in school affairs. Improving the relationship between minority parents and the schools should continue to be a major consideration of both educators and the community in general. Parental involvement in school affairs has typically had positive effects on the student's educational achievement.

VII. Implications of Research Findings

Providing all students with quality education should be the major priority of all educational systems. However, this goal is dependent on a multitude of factors and is difficult to attain. This and other studies have documented the fact that some students have access to better educational and training opportunities than others. Federal, state, and local educators should direct their efforts toward meeting the needs of all students, and, although career education has provided a strong impetus in this direction, a large gap remains between rhetoric and action.

A major objective of this study was to submit recommendations to state and local educational planners, especially those concerned with the broad field of occupational education. Many of these recommendations are implicit in the findings of this study, and some have been spelled out in the four reports previously submitted to the Texas Education Agency. A comprehensive list of recommendations was also submitted to Texas Education Agency in the report entitled Mexican American Youth and Vocational Education in Texas (1973). Similar recommendations have also been made by the Advisory Council for Technical-Vocational Education in Texas.* To a large extent, these recommendations are still applicable today, and the reader is referred to these sources for specific details concerning these recommendations. Only a few important recommendations will be mentioned here.

It is apparent that better coordination between vocational education programs and labor market demands is needed. Current and future manpower

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*See Fourth Annual Report of the Advisory Council for Technical-Vocational Education in Texas, Education for Living and Making a Living, Austin, Texas, November, 1973. Also, see Appendices D and E of this report for a summary of the 1974 Community Conference Proceedings and the needs of special groups as spelled out by the Council.

data must be compiled and made available to program planners at the state and local levels in order that they may better match local programs with regional and state job requirements. Vocational program composition needs to be structured so that it reflects the realities of the labor market, and program enrollment should reflect a well-balanced socioeconomic, ethnic, and sex representation.

It should be noted that students interviewed in this study came mostly from low income homes. It is apparent that not many middle class parents have children in vocational education, and the feeling is that many middle class parents, including minority parents, harbor negative attitudes toward vocational education because they still view VE programs negatively and most of all they want their children to go to college. School personnel must find a way to educate and inform all parents about vocational education programs.

New programs need to be initiated, others eliminated, and some expanded. New Curriculum materials should be developed, modified, and/or changed. To meet different student needs, curriculum development should remain flexible and up to date. In-service training and other professional development activities for all school personnel need to be continued and expanded. Teacher and counselor training institutions should keep abreast of the changes occurring in society and in the field of education and adjust their programs appropriately. Schools having large or mixed minority enrollments should encourage their staffs to become more aware of these student's sensitivities.

Vocational education must be made more attractive to all students in the secondary school setting, and credibility must be established in the public eye, particularly in the minority communities. Secondary and post-secondary vocational institutions should make more of an effort to coordinate their programs to allow the student a logical training sequence rather than a duplication of his/her high school training. Vocational educators must continue to extend themselves to industry, business, and the community in general and utilize their vast reservoir of expertise in the classroom and in planning activities. The relationship between vocational educational and career education should be clarified and explained both to school personnel and the public at large.

Career education and guidance activities are two crucial variables which could act as catalysts in revolutionizing the educational system. The need for increased, improved, and different guidance activities has been constantly expressed by educators and the community alike. Career education should be an integral part of any counseling and guidance program, especially in the two areas identified by this study: student educational planning at the intermediate grades and occupational/career guidance activities at the high school level. In addition to counselors, classroom teachers and administrators should be involved in this process.

Alternative methods of counseling and guidance should be encouraged. Peer counseling, use of counselor aides, and group processes are just three examples. However, any guidance programs having sound objectives, a structured curriculum, and an effective process should be given strong consideration. In regard to minority students, especially Mexican Americans, it appears group guidance approaches would have more utility. Group techniques

have already been found to be highly effective in providing career guidance to high school youth. These programs focus on preparing youth to make a positive transition from school to suitable employment or other post-high school training and/or education.

If career education were to be properly implemented in the school setting, many of the problems currently found in the counseling and guidance field would diminish. However, it is clear that in-service training needs to be increased and innovative approaches continued before the guidance needs of minority students can be met.

Perhaps the most important ingredient of change lies in the effective dissemination of research results and in the utilization and implementation of major recommendations made as a result of these findings. This undoubtedly is a difficult task, but one that can be accomplished through the development of follow-up approaches which would assist school personnel in effectively translating research findings into practical use at the state and local levels.

Although this research effort did not answer all the questions to which it addressed itself, it did identify and clarify some of the issues concerning vocational education and minority youth in this State. The findings presented here will hopefully inform educators and the public alike about the needs, aspirations, and attitudes of today's high school youth and provide future researchers with a data base which will allow for continued and systematic vocational education evaluation activities. Current and timely evaluative research is one of the best techniques through which educational structures can gear their programs to prepare students for a meaningful and productive life in a society whose only constant is change.

PART TWO

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Instruments Used, Methodology and Project Organization

I. Description of Instruments

There were eight different questionnaires used in this study:

Form A: Vocational Students
Form B: Non-Vocational Students
Form C: Vocational Education Graduates
Form D: School Dropouts
Form E: Employers
Form F: Parents
Form G: School Personnel
Form H: Community Informants

The A and B questionnaires were combined into one instrument which contained identical items except for four pages which only vocational students were asked to complete. The A/B instrument was a high structured questionnaire. It was a modification of the questionnaire used previously in the Mexican American study. This questionnaire was pre-tested for readability, length, and format in the Galveston Independent School District. Student questionnaires were administered in large group settings during the Fall Semester, 1973. The time required for completion was approximately one class period (45-55 minutes). It was the intent of this study to reach at least 200 students in each school district with approximately twice the number of students in vocational programs as in general academic programs. In the larger urban areas, more students were selected to allow for a tri-ethnic analysis. Over 2,500 students in 23 Texas high schools responded to this instrument; of this number over 1,500 were Blacks. The items in Form A/B covered a variety of topics, and the questionnaire was well received by the majority of the students. It focused on student characteristics, attitudes toward school and vocational education, post-high school preferences, migration plans for job or training opportunities, and other school related activities. The questionnaire was largely close-ended and arranged for printing on forms for ease in coding on optical scanning sheets. A few open-ended items gave students an opportunity to express themselves more openly.

The C/D Form was used with a limited sample of graduates and dropouts, and the majority of interviews were conducted on a one-to-one basis by local personnel familiar with their communities contracted by the project. In addition to basic socioeconomic items, this questionnaire documented attitudes toward school, vocational education, and work, and allowed for a follow-up of education, training, and employment data of graduates and dropouts.

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The employer questionnaire (E) was used mainly to assess employer attitudes toward vocational education and students who had been through vocational education training in high school. This questionnaire relied more on semi-structured and open-ended items than the previous forms. It was administered primarily on a one-to-one basis.

Parents whose children were enrolled in vocational education programs in the high school were given a brief questionnaire (F) which solicited opinions concerning school and vocational education and inquired into their children's future plans. These interviews were conducted on a one-to-one basis by specially trained local personnel familiar with their communities.

Forms G and H were administered to school and community persons respectively. These semi-structured instruments were administered by project staff, and they inquired into attitudes toward vocational education, career education, and other related topics. Both were brief questionnaires which were very instrumental in orienting project staff to many problem areas and needs encountered in the schools.

To complement the acquisition of primary data, two other analyses were undertaken: a complete demographic analysis detailing state and local population characteristics, trends, and projections and an analysis of the labor force as related to current vocational programs. These two studies were continuous , ongoing activities during the course of the project and were conducted at project headquarters utilizing the latest census data counts and information provided by the Texas Education Agency and the Texas Employment Commission.

II. Sampling Procedures

The general format for student selection (A/B) was by class or instructional unit. In a few instances, local situations necessitated modification of this procedure. Rosters of both VE and Non-VE students were developed in cooperation with the school being surveyed and classes were then randomly selected until the approximate number of students had been reached. The samples were selected so that there would be twice as many VE students as Non-VE students. The VE students represented the spectrum of available vocational programs. The other subsamples were not randomly selected. They were for the most part purposive samples.

III. Project Organization

A. Phasing

The research project was divided into three major phases, each having a set of clearly identifiable objectives and deadlines. The three phases of this project are described below:

Phase 1: Preparation and Feedback, March 1 to August 31, 1973

March 1 to April 30, 1973 - During this period project staff initiated preliminary revision of all instruments utilized in the Mexican American project. Priority was placed on the in-school instrument (A/B). The A/B instrument was developed by project staff and pre-tested in the Galveston Independent School District. Other instruments utilized by the project were also developed and finalized during this period. These included a high school graduate questionnaire (C), a questionnaire for school dropouts (D), and four other separate instruments used with employers (E), parents (F), school personnel (G), and community people (H).

May 1 to June 30, 1973 - During this period field work for selected target groups was initiated--employers, school personnel, and community informants. Initial contacts with school districts were also made at this time in order to establish schedules for workshops and seminars concerning feedback on Mexican American Project (local findings) and in-service training for vocational education personnel and other interested parties. Also, initial contacts were made in those cities which were to be surveyed in the Fall Semester, 1973. All questionnaires and codebooks to be used in the Fall survey were finalized. In addition, initial collection of demographic and manpower data was initiated.

July 1 to August 31, 1973 - Data contained in the Mexican American project were analyzed and packets prepared for each school district that participated in the survey. Student responses and manpower information was stressed in these packets. A total of five workshops were conducted throughout South and West Texas.* Interviewing of target population other than in-school students was continued during this period. Progress Report 1 submitted to funding agency.

Phase 2: Field Phase, September 1, 1973 to January 31, 1974

September 1-30, 1973 - Survey schedules in selected cities were finalized. Project staff was oriented and trained for field phase and training materials and procedures for use with field personnel in target communities were developed.

October 1 to December 31, 1973 - This period saw the initiation of the field work in the schools to be surveyed. Emphasis was placed on completing all in-school interviewing. All other target groups--school personnel, employers, parents, community people, graduates, and dropouts--were interviewed during

*Workshops were held in El Paso, Del Rio, Eagle Pass, Laredo (2) and Harlingen. The Harlingen workshop, held on the Texas State Technical Institute campus, included participants from throughout the Rio Grande Valley area.

this period. Project staff recruited and trained local personnel in most areas to conduct out-of-school interviewing during this period. Also, coding of all in-school questionnaires was begun as soon as they were received from the field.

January 1-31, 1974 - This month was devoted to completion of the field phase. The bulk of the interviewing was completed by the end of January and a large portion of the coding of the out-of-school instruments was done during this period. Progress Report II was submitted to the funding agency.

Phase 3: Analysis and Dissemination, February 1 to June 30, 1974

Completion of coding, analysis of data, and writing of final reports were accomplished during this period. Demographic and manpower analysis was intensified and completed during this phase. Final reports were submitted to the funding agency, and arrangements made for the dissemination of these reports.

B. Staffing

The project was under the direction of two Co-Directors, Roberto S. Guerra and Robert L. Armstrong, who in turn were responsible to Dr. Joseph E. Champagne, Associate Director for Research, and Dr. J. Earl Williams, Director of the Center for Human Resources. Chief consultant to the project was Dr. Sam Schulman, Professor of Sociology at the University of Houston. Jo Ann Verdin (Data Analysis), Terry Mullins (Manpower) and Tatcho Mindiola (Demography) served as Research Associates. Randall Dowdell (Interviewer) assisted in a major portion of the field work. Project staff trained and supervised specially contracted personnel to assist in field interviewing and in coding phases of the project. Project staff received additional informal assistance and advice from a variety of sources: other Center staff, state and local educational personnel, manpower specialists throughout the state, and many other key informants in the communities surveyed.

APPENDIX B

SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND HIGH SCHOOLS SURVEYED

BEAUMONT INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Charlton-Pollard High School
- Beaumont Technical Center

PORT ARTHUR INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Lincoln High School
- Stilwell Technical Center

MARSHALL INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Marshall High School

TYLER INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

- John Tyler High School
- Robert E. Lee High School

WACO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Jefferson Moore High School
- Richfield High School

FORT WORTH INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Trimble Technical Center

DALLAS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Pinkston High School
- South Oak Cliff High School
- Bryan Adams High School
- Skyline High School

GALVESTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Ball High School

SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Sam Houston High School
- Fox Technical Center

HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Madison High School
- Houston Technical Institute
- Jefferson Davis High School

AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Reagan High School
- Stephen F. Austin High School
- Lanier High School
- Johnston High School

APPENDIX C

MAJOR REPORTS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE ADVISORY COUNCIL
FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN TEXAS

The Council continues work on the responsibilities outlined in Senate Bill 261, Sixty-First Legislature (Chapter 31, Texas Education Code), which expanded the responsibilities of the State Advisory Council as envisioned in the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968, U. S. Congress. Responsibilities of the Council have been further expanded by both federal and state statutes. Initial responsibilities of the Council are summarized broadly in Section 3 of the above referenced state statute,"....to cause to be established a climate conducive to the development of technical, vocational, and manpower training in educational institutions in the State of Texas to meet the needs of industrial and economic development of the state."

Members of the Council are recommended by the Governor, appointed by the State Board of Education and confirmed by the State Senate for six-year staggered terms. The twenty-one members of the Council annually give over 200 man days to formal Council and Committee meetings and hearings. This does not include work done as individual members on Council responsibilities, and work with groups and organizations in their areas of the State.

This summary report will not cover many of the detailed responsibilities and activities of the Council and staff. Following is a tabulation of the major reports published by the Council:

General Description of Reports	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974
1. Annual Reports to the Governor	March	April	April	April	April
2. Annual Reports to the State Board for Vocational Education	Sept.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Nov.*
3. Biennial Reports to the State Legislature	Dec.		Dec.		Dec.*
4. Advisory Council Brochures	May	Oct.		Nov.	
5. Summaries of Annual Reports for Use in Public Forum Meetings	Sept.	Sept.		Jan.	
6. Proceedings and Reports on Public Forum Meetings (1) Governor's Conference, (2) Regional Hearings, (3) Community Conferences	July (1)	March (2)	July (3)	June (1)	June (3)
7. Legislative Directed Studies		March SR 865	Dec. SCR 89	March SCR 11	June
8. Proceedings...Teacher Education Hearing		March			
9. Guidance Services Handbook				Oct.	

*To be submitted.

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A monthly publication, ACTVE News, is prepared and mailed to over 2500 persons throughout the state. Publication was begun in May 1970. Numerous Staff Analyses, Working Papers, Background Information Data, Surveys and other similar activities are carried out by the Council for its use and dissemination.

The Council has produced a 16-minute color 16 mm film, entitled "The Future... My Destination" and twenty copies are used throughout the state. Fifty sets of a slide/tape presentation entitled "A Redirected Education System" are widely used.

The Council has provided a public forum for over 10,000 citizens through two Governor's Conferences, Regional Hearings and Community conferences and has held meetings throughout the state informing itself in all areas of responsibilities of the Council.

APPENDIX D

General Summary of Community Conference Concerns*

This section offers a summary of the thoughts, attitudes, or opinions which surfaced most often during the community conferences conducted by the Advisory Council for Technical-Vocational Education between January 25-February 28, 1974.

Relevancy in Education

1. The Council was impressed by a positive attitude on the part of school and community leaders in several communities in seeking more effective ways of providing relevant educational programs, experiences and services to meet the diverse needs and interests of all citizens; however, in other communities there was little or no evidence of efforts along these lines.

2. The differences between communities insofar as meeting the diverse needs of its citizens appear more pronounced now than two years ago when the Council held a similar series of community conferences. Much of this can be attributed to career education pilot projects and similar activities existing in some communities and not in others and also greater activity in some communities in the development and/or expansion of vocational programs.

3. Present exemplary programs in career education are effective. However, if the impact of career education is to be effectively utilized, provision must be made to continue and further develop the concept.

4. Education efforts to better serve the needs of citizens will not be redirected until funding incentives are redirected; curriculum and accreditation standards are redirected; and the case for the redirection of the educational system is made to citizens in general who are ultimately responsible for the education system.

Student Involvement/Concerns

1. Students were actively involved in several community conferences. In the North East School District in San Antonio, students had displays of program activities at the conference site and conducted an 80 item survey of nearly 1,400 high school students in the district. A computerized analysis of the study was presented to the State Advisory Council Task Force.

2. In other communities students gave reports to the Council Task Force, participated in discussion groups and expressed themselves very effectively. Suggestions from students during the conferences usually related to items such as:

SOURCE: Proceedings: 1974 Community Conferences, Education for Living and Making a Living, published by the Advisory Council for Technical-Vocational Education in Texas, June 1974, pp. 20-24.

a. the need for a greater variety of vocational programs;

b. a lack of information at the lower grade levels concerning vocational programs and services and how they can help them;

c. required courses and high school graduation requirements were unrealistic in relation to their objectives;

d. a lack of understanding on the part of parents of the programs and services offered in school; and

e. parental pressures toward unrealistic goals for the student.

Public Awareness/Communications

1. Awareness and/or communication was a frequent topic of community conferences. These rather broad topics took on many directions.

2. Mechanisms for communication seem to be generally ineffective. Much of this can be attributed to the ATTITUDE of citizens in general. For the most part parents "send their child to school to get an education" and do not accept the fact that they are involved. Teachers and other school personnel report an indifference and/or hostility to new approaches to education by parents.

3. Efforts to create a greater public awareness and involvement of vocational programs and services must be intensified and varied to reach the broad spectrum of citizen interests. Suggestions made during the conferences as to what can be done to create a greater awareness of vocational education include:

   a. intensify the use of the mass media--radio/television, newspapers, magazines, posters, etc.

   b. work through parent, teacher and student associations and other organized groups.

   c. utilize vocational students in awareness efforts both in the school and community.

   d. establish speaker bureaus comprised of business, industry, labor and education people who can address civic groups, professional organizations, parent groups, etc. This technique was used very successfully in Brazosport.

   e. utilize parents and other resources in the community.

   f. use every opportunity to display and advertise vocational programs offered at educational levels.

   g. intensify leadership and coordinative efforts at the state level in providing materials and inservice activities on techniques in public information, and

h. approaches will vary from community to community, but in all communities efforts in public awareness and involvement should be coordinated between the public school and post-secondary institution.

4. A Parent Teacher Association leader expressed a strong feeling that when information is presented on vocational/technical education, the main point seems to always be how much money the individual makes. This turns off many students, as many are looking for things such as job satisfaction, personal fulfillment and accomplishment and these elements should be emphasized.

Parent Education

1. Parent education emerged as one of the most critical needs in the 16 community conferences. Parents must understand the objectives of education, the education resources available, and the limitations of the education system. They must understand that each individual has different needs, and they must come to understand the relationship between education and the world of work. They must understand their role in their child's education.

2. Even though public information and school involvement activities have made a contribution to parent education, it seems that efforts must be better structured, extensive and they must begin with the earliest involvement of the child and parent in school. This involvement must continue throughout the time the child is in the school system.

3. In one community it was suggested that groups, such as RSVP (Retired Service Volunteer Program) workers, become involved in making personal calls on parents to explain the education program.

Utilization of Local Advisory Councils

1. Local advisory councils were very active in some communities, while in others they were not especially active.

2. Local advisory councils which are effectively utilized provide a strong relationship between the school and community; giving the vocational programs visibility within the community; providing recruitment and placement for students in vocational programs; making contributions to updating of curriculum and reinforcing the program in the community.

3. It was suggested that resource personnel be provided in each educational service center to work with local school leaders in providing inservice education and technical assistance in working with advisory councils. That such personnel also assist in programs of awareness of vocational programs within the area.

Vocational Education Objectives

1. Several concerns were expressed by conference participants which indicate the need for reviewing the objectives of vocational education:

a. A policy letter was issued by the Texas Education Agency stating that the continuation of high school data processing programs will be dependent upon an increase in the number of students who go directly to work in data processing occupations upon completion of high school.

b. Follow-up reports utilized as a means of determining if a vocational program should be continued reveal only those individuals going directly into employment upon completion of training in a field directly or indirectly related to their training. Not taken into consideration is the lasting value of that training whether its use comes in five or ten years after training was completed.

c. Follow-up reports should be used as only one criterion for determining if a vocational program could be continued.

d. While follow-up reports may indicate higher priorities for other vocational programs, they may not necessarily reflect the true value of a vocational program which has a low number of students going directly to work upon completion of high school.

Traditionally, vocational education has been described as providing individuals with saleable skills for entry into semiskilled, skilled, technician and a variety of other jobs requiring less than a baccalaureate college degree. It was pointed out on numerous occasions that it should be in order for vocational high school students to continue their education at the post-secondary level in a vocational-technical program area and use skills acquired in vocational-technical programs in the broad preparation for jobs requiring a college degree.

Pre-Vocational & Exploratory Experiences

1. Continuing as a top concern among citizens and school personnel was that very little is offered the middle or junior high school student in the way of pre-vocational and exploratory experiences that relate to the world of work. It was pointed out that few of these schools have laboratory facilities and equipment suitable for providing such experiences and it would be very expensive to provide them. The highest dropout rates occur in these schools or in the transition to high school, even though the circumstances contributing to such a decision may have developed earlier.

2. The redirection of the industrial arts programs was viewed as a move in the right direction. However, redirected industrial arts programs would not provide exploratory experiences in many occupational areas such as marketing and distribution, health careers, office education, and other job clusters. It was suggested that vocational teachers could be rescheduled to spend at least one hour a day conducting programs in the middle and junior high schools in their occupational areas.

3. It was pointed out that pre-vocational and exploratory experiences would provide:

an excellent basis for career decisions based upon actual exploratory experiences;

incentives to many students to remain in school to participate in further career preparation;

a basis for the application of knowledge and thereby enhance the development of basic educational skills;

provide an opportunity for the development of some life coping skills.

CVAE Programs

1. Coordinated Vocational Academic Education (CVAE) programs were frequently identified as being very helpful in keeping many students in school and providing them with an entry level skill and/or motivating them to pursue regular programs.

2. There was considerable question raised as to the appropriateness of criteria for eligible students in CVAE programs. The minimum age of 14 for eligible students was causing substantial problems and keeping many needy students out of the programs and in some cases reducing the enrollments below the reallocation levels.

Evaluation of Students

1. Classroom teachers indicated that a variety of influences prevent sufficient flexibility in their evaluation of students. These influences include:

   a. requirements for documenting all elements of evaluation--tests, papers, etc.;

   b. the general attitude on the part of students and parents that the grade is "all important," not necessarily what is learned;

   c. the pressure to graduate from high school, to go to college;

   d. the curriculum is not designed to provide flexibility in the evaluation of students to accommodate the varying abilities, aptitudes and interests of the individual students;

   e. the curriculum is heavily oriented toward being "time based" not "performance based," and

   f. the heavy influence of matching high school graduation and evaluation to college entrance requirements.

Guidance Services

1. Needs in guidance services received attention in every community. It appears that the multitude of suggestions can be summarized as follows:

a. smaller ratio of guidance counselors to pupils;

b. relieve counselors from many noncounseling duties through the assignment of supportive personnel;

c. continual review of counselor preparation programs;

d. use of differential staffing in guidance services programs;

e. intensify inservice activities of guidance service personnel and more effectively involve them in community activities for better understanding of community resources;

f. more clearly define the role of guidance services in the school;

g. more effectively utilize the classroom teacher's observations of students in guidance information file;

h. parent education would enhance the work of guidance personnel immensely;

i. effective utilization of group guidance techniques and community resources;

j. peer counseling, especially with regard to providing opportunities for students to talk with fellow students who are involved in programs of mutual interest;

2. Employers continue to emphasize the importance of the individual to understand the necessity to get along with fellow workers and to be responsive to change.

3. Students generally believe that they must make a choice between vocational education or college preparation. However, with good planning, they can do both if they desire.

Personnel Development

1. Several concerns were expressed that relate to the professional aspects of vocational educators. These include:

a. tenure credit for eligible wage earning experience in computing the salary schedule of vocational teachers for the state salary reimbursement;

b. provision for salary time for inservice education of vocational teachers that are not on salary during the state inservice education. This applies to about 33 percent of vocational teachers in the state;

c. put vocational administrators on a 12 month contract and adjust their salary schedule from the present 10B to grade 14, making salary commensurate with responsibilities.

Area Vocational Schools

1. Several communities visited have area school designations and/or have community colleges that are designated as area schools.

2. In some communities there is substantial contracting of students between public school districts and with community colleges. However, in other districts these resources were not mutually utilized.

3. A variety of barriers exist in many communities. A special study is being made of this question by the Council and will be reported at a later date. The provision by the 63rd Legislature for transportation for vocational students has been very helpful in most communities, but in some there seems to be a problem, or at least confusion, on the use of this resource.

Supply/Demand System

1. Supply/Demand Information developed at the state level for planning of education programs should also be applicable to local needs for similar purposes.

2. It was evident in some communities that education leaders do not have a realistic understanding of the educational requirements of the job market and the influence the job market should have upon education and planning.

Adult Education

1. Adult education legislation passed and funded by the 63rd Legislature is having an impact throughout the state. However, many barriers remain to be resolved before the full impact of the adult education provisions are felt throughout the state. Further study will be given this area by the Council.

APPENDIX E

The Needs of Special Groups*

The needs of special groups has been a concern of the Advisory Council throughout its deliberations. Special efforts were made in the 16 community conferences to involve ethnic minorities, women, disadvantaged, handicapped, veterans and others in the conferences. Community conference planners were encouraged to make special efforts to involve these groups in conference study groups and other activities.

The success of the communities in the involvement of special groups in the conferences varied from some meaningful involvement to very little to none. Several groups and individuals made some very meaningful input, especially from ethnic minorities. Efforts are made in this section to summarize some of the points made to the Council.

1. In one community a special study group was formed for review of Mexican American concerns, and the following points are summarized from the report:

   a. The Mexican American community feels that their educational needs are not being met. Since education is so vital for living and making a living, they are concerned that the system does not provide academic or vocational preparation for life and does not make sufficient effort to understand cultural differences.

   b. The education system does not have sufficient Mexican Americans on its staff that can effectively relate to our children and citizens; consequently, our children are not understood, feel incompetent, develop inferiority feelings and these result in high dropout rates.

   c. The emphasis placed on vocational education is welcomed; however, it is felt that many Mexican American children are put in vocational programs because they have been unable to cope with academic education because of cultural differences which must be resolved before the children can receive adequate education.

   d. The educational experiences are designed for the majority group and insufficient effort is made to effectively involve Mexican American children. There is a tendency to put the Mexican American children in separated groups and place them in certain schools. These practices leave the children unprepared to make a decent life and living. The low economic status makes it difficult for these children to overcome these disadvantages in later life.

   e. Special efforts should be made to work not only with the children but also with the parents in order that they can be informed, motivated and involved.

SOURCE: Proceedings: 1974 Community Conferences, Education for Living and Making a Living, published by the Advisory Council for Technical-Vocational Education in Texas, June 1974, pp. 25-26.

n. 50 blank

2. In one community a black businessman made a presentation concerning his viewpoints as a minority and a citizen of the community, and the following is a summary of his remarks:

   a. In the opinion of the speaker, black people in his community must overcome fear, lack of confidence, lack of determination, lack of goals in their lives, and the lack of cooperation among themselves.

   b. The speaker expressed appreciation for the progress that has been made in recent years in the employment of blacks, but you will not find blacks working in the local department stores, grocery stores, banks and similar businesses.

   c. In view of the absence of blacks in places of employment throughout the community, the parents and children seem to have little motivation to do well in school when they cannot see that it would improve their lot in the community. Too many of our people are going to school because they have to go.

   d. The speaker emphasized that the opportunities for education of the black people have improved a great deal in recent years. He expressed confidence that businessmen in the community would hire blacks that are adequately prepared for the jobs.

   e. In many instances a whole race or class of people have been condemned for what one person did. We are not all alike; there is good and bad in all people. We must challenge people to develop their individual personalities and abilities and make a worthwhile contribution that is self-fulfilling. The speaker reminded the group that economic poverty does not mean a poverty of ideas and abilities. In fact, many times poor people have a lot of time to think through and develop ideas and all they need is the support of those who have the economic means of developing the idea.

3. In another community the Council received a report from the NAACP Study Group. Some of their points that have not been made above include:

   a. Lines of communication and involvement between the black community and the business and community leadership should be strengthened.

   b. Success models of employment are not available in the community to motivate black people. Most of the jobs held by blacks are low status jobs. The black people who are educated and prepared for higher status jobs do not find opportunities in the community.

   c. The group called for complete integration of the school faculty and for the hiring of black and Mexican American aides in the schools. Black and Mexican American counselors are urgently needed.

   d. The group called for strengthening of adult education opportunities in the community and emphasized the need for parent education and involvement.

4. Other comments relating to ethnic minority problems are summarized as follows:

   a. Strengthen the leadership and coordination from the Texas Education Agency to the local schools in the development of programs to serve the needs of these special groups.

   b. From the Rio Grande Valley came the suggestion that the Texas Education Agency provide more technical assistance in the development of special programs to serve the needs of special groups, especially in the identification of funding sources.

   c. Another problem identified is the employment of well qualified vocational instructors that are sensitive to and can relate to the problems of special groups.

   d. Special preparation of all school personnel to the differing and special needs of students. That school personnel demonstrate a commitment to the maximum development of each individual and not just to simply strive to get all students to a given level.

   e. Broaden the vocational programs to encompass the "cluster concept"; thereby increasing the alternatives for employment. Strengthen the cooperative and work study programs for special groups.

   f. Traditional methods of evaluation of students may be the most damaging single factor in working with special groups. Instruction and evaluation should be performance based. This would involve change in the curriculum as well as standard and/or traditional evaluations by employers and institutional entrance requirements for further preparation.

5. Some concerns expressed in communities that related to the special needs of the handicapped, disadvantaged and women are as follows:

   a. The words "disadvantaged," "low achiever," "potential dropout," and "dropout" all have connotations of "failure," "lacking intelligence," or "being beneath society's norms." These words should not be used in any program as criteria for entry or otherwise. Everyone can achieve at something, but no one can achieve at everything. Educational experiences must be comprehensive enough to serve the diverse needs of all people.

   b. Programs designed for the disadvantaged should embrace realistic goals as they relate to educational experiences and employment. If they can't come to the program, then the program should go to them. All citizens should be developed to their maximum self-sufficiency.

   c. Vocational offerings should be available when they are needed and not necessarily when the individual has attained a certain age or grade level.

d. Work-study experiences should be an alternative in meeting the needs of special groups. Also, the development of a program for developing "life coping skills."

e. The success of CVAE and Plan A of the Special Education programs was emphasized by conference participants in several communities. It was pointed out that vocational education must be an important part of Plan A. In one community a special concern was expressed for closer coordination of vocational and special education programs.

f. There was almost universal concern expressed that jobs and preparation for jobs not be "sex stereotyped." It is not enough to simply say the sex barriers have been removed, but efforts should be made to develop the awareness that sex barriers have been removed.

It seems that many of the above concerns could be alleviated when we achieve an educational system that is flexible and responsive to the multitude of needs of individuals that are generated through the interaction of the factors of INTEREST, APTITUDE, ABILITY and CIRCUMSTANCES.

ERRATA

OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION JN TEXAS: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
by
Roberto S. Guerra

Page 7, first paragraph reading:

Of those students enrolled in vocational programs in the State, 38 percent are Anglo, 39 percent are Mexican American, and 47 percent are Black. School districts surveyed in this study generally followed similar patterns. That is, Blacks appeared to be more overrepresented in VE programs than Mexican Americans and Mexican Americans more than Anglos. This was especially true in urban areas having a tri-ethnic student enrollment.

Should read:

Of those students enrolled in vocational programs in the State (grades 9-12), approximately 65 percent are Anglo, 18 percent are Mexican American, and 17 percent are Black; however, 39 percent of all Anglo students, 39 percent of all Mexican American students, and 47 percent of all Black students in the total enrollment of grades 9-12 are enrolled in vocational education programs.